

RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF OCTOBER 28, 2005 MEETING

Board Members Present: Thomas Deller, Chairperson, William Kennedy, Sharon Wells, and James Capaldi.

Absent: Robert Batting

Also Present: Alfred J. Moscola (General Manager), Lori Caron Silveira (Outside General Counsel), Henry Kinch, Deborah Dawson, Maureen Neira, Mark Therrien, Ellen Farrell, other members of RIPTA's senior staff and the public whose names are listed on the meeting sign-in sheet.

Agenda Item 1: Approval of Minutes of September 19, 2005 Meeting

Mr. Deller requested comments regarding the minutes of the September 19, 2005 meeting. Hearing none, a motion was made for the approval of the minutes of the September 19, 2005 meeting by Mr. Kennedy, which was seconded by Ms. Wells. The Board unanimously approved the minutes as presented.

Agenda Item 2: General Managers Report

Mr. Deller asked Mr. Moscola for his report. Mr. Moscola reported that the cost of fuel is still an issue and is currently at \$2.56 a gallon. He stated that of the 36 new Gillig buses ordered, 28 have arrived and are in service, 7 are being readied for service and 1 has not yet been delivered. Mr. Moscola also reported that of the total fleet of 54 RIDOT vehicles, 32 have been serviced and are ready for service. Mr. Moscola has committed to Director Capaldi to have all RIDOT vehicle maintenance completed by December 17th in order to have the vehicles prepared for maintaining the roads during severe winter weather.

Mr. Moscola then discussed the Assessable Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) quarterly meeting held at RIPTA on October 27th. In the past the ATAC members have raised concerns regarding the performance of the wheelchair lifts, and the General Manager was pleased to report that RIPTA is doing very well in this area. Regarding ADA announcements, Mr. Moscola stated that RIPTA is currently performing at 75%, which places RIPTA 2nd in the nation for compliance. Following the ATAC meeting Mr. Moscola and the committee toured the new low floor buses and paratransit vehicles. They were very impressed with the new vehicles and especially appreciated the new location of the wheelchair seats at the front of the vehicle.

Mr. Deller then pointed out former Board member, Barry Schiller, was in attendance and thanked Mr. Schiller for his and the Sierra Club's media advertisements advocating taking the bus. Mr. Deller discussed the increase in ridership in relation to the high cost of fuel and asked Mr. Moscola to track such information and report at next month's meeting. Mr. Moscola responded that Mark Therrien is working on a presentation for next month.

Agenda Item 3: Demolition of Buildings – McKendall Property

Mr. Deller asked staff for an update on the status of the award of the contract for the demolition of the McKendall property. Roger Mencarini addressed the Board and provided them with the details of the project. Mr. Mencarini indicated that since the Board had requested that RIPTA obtain further information from the bidder, the issues raised were carefully reviewed. Lori Caron Silveira indicated that she had reviewed the additional information, and concurred with staff's recommendation. After a brief discussion, William Kennedy moved that the award be made to BilRay Demolition as recommended; Sharon Wells seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 4: On-Call Architectural and Engineering Services

Roger Mencarini discussed the next agenda item, the award of a contract to Cataldo Associates for miscellaneous architectural and

engineering services needed by the Authority on an ongoing basis. Mr. Deller inquired as to the scope of the work and Mr. Mencarini responded that it would cover such things as security enhancements and the Ride building. Mr. Deller asked if this would cover the McKendall property and Mr. Mencarini said it would not. Mr. Kennedy moved that the contract be awarded to Cataldo Associates as recommended. Mr. Capaldi seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 5: Parking Spaces/New Docking Facility for Providence – Newport Ferry Service

Henry Kinch addressed the Board and discussed the next agenda item, the need for parking spaces and a new docking facility for the Providence to Newport ferry. This new facility would replace the current facility at Point Street in Providence, where delays and cancellations have been experienced due to the hurricane barrier. He also indicated that the new arrangement would provide twice as many parking spaces for the same cost. After a brief discussion Director Capaldi made a motion to award the contract to RI State Pier Properties, LLC as recommended by staff. Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 6: Mack Truck Parts

Mr. Mencarini addressed the Board and discussed the

recommendation of the award of a contract to Ballard Mack Truck Sales and Service for the supply and delivery of parts for the Mack Trucks owned by RIDOT, which will be serviced by RIPTA. Director Capaldi added that this award would save money for the RIDOT on parts. Mr. Deller responded that this was a good example of cooperation between state agencies. Mr. Kennedy made a motion to award the contract as recommended by staff. Ms. Wells seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 7: Planning Department Report on Trolley Public Hearings

Mark Therrien addressed the Board to discuss this informational agenda item. He began by reporting that since the service changes and fare increase six months ago, ridership levels that had fallen have now returned to within 1% of levels prior to the increase. Public Hearings were held on October 4th to discuss the proposed service change, the lengthening of the trolley headway time from 15 to 20 minutes. There were only six members of the public present, including Barry Schiller a transit advocate and former RIPTA Board member. Mr. Therrien, along with General Manager Moscola, outlined the proposed changes, listened to the concerns of those present and answered questions. It was suggested at the public hearing that funding be sought from individual cities and private business and that the state offer subsidized parking to those leaving their cars outside of the city and riding the bus to work. Director Capaldi

discussed his goal to bring an 'MTA' train type system to RI. He spoke at length about the congestion on the state's highways, noting there is no room for expansion. He hopes to have an MTA system to transport people from areas such as Westerly and Wickford to Providence and to the airport, with RIPTA buses transporting passengers once they disembark. A discussion ensued among the members, noting the need for more 'Public Transportation and Mass Transit'.

Agenda Item 8: Change Trolley Frequency from 15 – 20 Minutes

After the discussion about the comments from the Public Hearings, Mr. Kennedy made a motion to change the headway time as requested. Director Capaldi seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 9: Preliminary FY 2007 Budget

Maureen Neira addressed the Board to discuss the Preliminary FY 2007 Budget. She reminded them that at the September meeting the 2007 budget assumptions were discussed. The preliminary FY 2007 budget totals \$88 million, representing a 7% increase over the FY 2006 budget, leaving RIPTA with a \$3.7 million deficit.

Ms. Neira then directed those present to the staff summary and discussed the budget in detail. She explained that the largest costs

are attributable to fuel and wage assumptions. She noted that all union contracts would be expiring during the current fiscal year. Tom Deller interjected that Ms. Neira and Mr. Moscola had discussed the budget with him, particularly the fuel estimates and the difficulty in budgeting gas tax yields. Staffing and open positions have been pared down as much as possible, which leaves the gas tax, Ritecare costs and the union contracts as the biggest concerns. Ms. Neira discussed these three areas, highlighted in the staff summary, in detail.

Mr. Moscola then discussed the budget and noted that while there is a deficit, each year the Authority is required to submit a budget based on assumptions over which RIPTA has no control, such as the gas tax yield. He and staff worked very hard to keep the FY 2007 budget down to the bare minimum, and this year is the lowest deficit number in recent years. He is particularly satisfied with the work done to trim the budget this year when faced with overwhelming increases in fuel costs. Mr. Kennedy asked if there were any figures available relative to the increase in ridership due to fuel costs and Mr. Therrien stated that while the research in his area is not fully completed, preliminary estimates show that ridership has increased by approximately 10%. Mr. Therrien will present the full report on ridership at the November meeting.

Mr. Capaldi again reiterated his fervent belief that the Department of Human Resources (DHS) should be paying the full cost of

transporting their riders and that the State Budget should be made aware of the total cost of this to RIPTA. Tom Deller stated that Mr. Capaldi has made this point frequently and eloquently and Ms. Neira needs to communicate it equally as well to the State Budget office representatives. Sharon Wells reiterated this sentiment and stated that the cost to RIPTA to transport rides for DHS must be clearly shown in the budget and State Budget Office should acknowledge this. Following the discussion William Kennedy made a motion to accept the Preliminary FY 2007 Budget as presented by staff. James Capaldi seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 10: Public Comment Period

Mr. Deller requested public comments and recognized Barry Schiller, a transit advocate and former RIPTA Board member. Mr. Schiller spoke at length regarding the increase in what he termed 'discretionary ridership'. He also discussed a letter he sent to Director Capaldi earlier this year advocating pretax incentives for state and private employees, targeting the labor unions for the same and environmental concerns. He also made suggestions for improving Kennedy Plaza security and adding additional bus shelters along the outskirts of the plaza. Mr. Deller thanked Mr. Schiller for his thoughtful commentary.

Agenda Item 11: Adjournment

There being no further business William Kennedy made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Director Capaldi seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen M. Farrell

Secretary to the Board